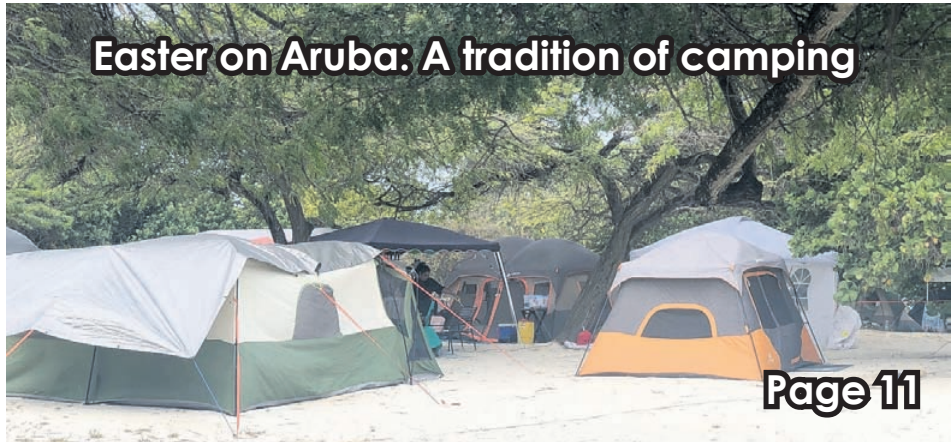




Beauty & the Beach

Page 9



Easter on Aruba: A tradition of camping

Page 11

**ARUBA**  
**TODAY**

Saturday  
April 15, 2023

T: 582-7800  
[www.arubatoday.com](http://www.arubatoday.com)  
[facebook.com/arubatoday](https://facebook.com/arubatoday)  
[instagram.com/arubatoday](https://instagram.com/arubatoday)

Aruba's ONLY English newspaper

Get it ALL done at Do It Center and Super Do It Center & Groceries

Page 8

# High court temporarily blocks restrictions on abortion pill

By MARK SHERMAN and JESSICA GRESKO  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Supreme Court said Friday it was temporarily keeping in place federal rules for use of an abortion drug, while it takes time to more fully consider the issues raised in a court challenge. In an order signed by Justice Samuel Alito, the court put a five-day pause on the fast-moving case so the justices can decide whether lower court rulings restricting the Food and Drug Administration's approval of the drug, mifepristone, should be allowed to take effect in the short term. The justices are being asked at this point only to determine what parts of an April 7 ruling by U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk in Texas, as modified by an appellate ruling Wednesday, can be in force while the case continues.



Boxes of the drug mifepristone sit on a shelf at the West Alabama Women's Center in Tuscaloosa, Ala., on March 16, 2022. Associated Press

Continued on Page 2

**LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK**  
Professional complimentary pictures on Tuesdays & Fridays

**SUNDAY**  
MARRYBELL MADURO  
SINGER  
6:30pm - 8:30pm

**MONDAY**  
ANGELA FLORES  
VIOLINIST  
6:30pm - 8:30pm

**TUESDAY**  
JEAN PAUL  
SAXOPHONIST  
6:30pm - 8:30pm

**WEDNESDAY**  
EDDIE KROON  
SINGER  
6:30pm - 8:30pm

**THURSDAY**  
MARRYBELL MADURO  
SINGER  
6:30pm - 8:30pm

**FRIDAY**  
RICKY THOMAS  
GUITARIST  
7:00pm - 9:00pm

**SATURDAY**  
ANGELA FLORES  
VIOLINIST  
6:30pm - 8:30pm

Everyday Happy Hour  
★ 12-1 / 4-6 / 9-10 ★

All Premium Brands  
Elegant dining, spectacular ocean views  
enjoyed al fresco or in air-conditioned comfort

KARAOKE  
HAPPY HOUR  
9:00pm - 11:00pm

Reservations at: [watersedge-aruba.com](http://watersedge-aruba.com)  
Tel. +297 583 8000 Ext. 8106  
Located at Costa Linda Beach Resort

**costa linda**  
beach resort

**WATER'S EDGE**  
RESTAURANT & BAR



# High court temporarily blocks restrictions on abortion pill

Continued from Front

The order expires late Wednesday, suggesting the court will decide that issue by then.

The court finds itself immersed in a new fight involving abortion less than a year after conservative justices reversed *Roe v. Wade* and allowed more than a dozen states to effectively ban abortion outright.

President Joe Biden's administration and New York-based Danco Laboratories, the maker of the pill, asked the justices to intervene.

A lawyer for the anti-abortion doctors and medical organizations suing over mifepristone said the court's action Friday was "standard operating procedure" and urged the justices to allow the appeals court-ordered changes to take effect by the middle of next week.

The type of order issued by the court Friday, an administrative stay, ordinarily is not an indication of what the justices will do going forward. It was signed by Alito because he handles emergency filings from Texas. Alito also is the author of last year's opinion overturning *Roe v. Wade*.

The Justice Department and Danco both warned of "regulatory chaos" and harm to women if the high court doesn't block the lower-court rulings that had the effect of tightening FDA rules under which the drug, mifepristone, can be prescribed and dispensed. The new limits would have taken effect Saturday if the court hadn't acted.

"This application concerns unprecedented lower court orders countermanding FDA's scientific judgment and unleashing regulatory chaos by suspending the existing FDA-approved conditions of use for mifepristone," Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar, the Biden administration's top Supreme Court lawyer, wrote Friday, less than two days after the appellate ruling.

The Biden administration and Danco now want a more lasting order that



The U.S. Supreme Court is seen at sunset, March 27, 2019, in Washington.

Associated Press

would keep the current rules in place as long as the legal fight over mifepristone continues. As a fallback, they asked the court to take up the issue, hear arguments and decide by early summer a legal challenge to mifepristone that anti-abortion doctors and medical organizations filed last year.

The court rarely acts so quickly to grant full review of cases before at least one appeals court has thoroughly examined the legal issues involved.

A ruling from the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals late Wednesday would prevent the pill, used in the most common abortion method, from being mailed or prescribed without an in-person visit to a doctor. It also would withdraw the Food and Drug Administration's approval of mifepristone for use beyond the seventh week of pregnancy. The FDA says it's safe through 10 weeks.

Still, the appeals court did not entirely withdraw FDA approval of mifepristone while the fight over it con-

tinues. The 5th circuit narrowed an April 7 ruling by U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk, whose far-reaching and virtually unprecedented order would have blocked FDA approval of the pill. He gave the administration a week to appeal.

"To the government's knowledge, this is the first time any court has abrogated FDA's conditions on a drug's approval based on a disagreement with the agency's judgment about safety — much less done so after those conditions have been in effect for years," Prelogar wrote.

Erin Hawley, a lawyer for the challengers, said in a statement that the FDA has put politics ahead of health concerns in its actions on medication abortion.

"The 5th Circuit rightly required the agency to prioritize women's health by restoring critical safeguards, and we'll urge the Supreme Court to keep that accountability in place," said Hawley, a senior counsel with Alliance Defending Freedom, a conserva-

tive legal group that also argued to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.

Mifepristone was approved by the FDA more than two decades ago and is used in combination with a second drug, misoprostol.

Adding to the uncertainty, a separate federal judge in Washington on Thursday clarified his own order from last week to make clear that the FDA is not to do anything that might block mifepristone's availability in 17 Democrat-led states suing to keep it on the market.

It's unclear how the FDA can comply with court orders in both cases, a situation that Prelogar described Friday as untenable.

Use of medication abortion jumped significantly after the FDA's 2016 rule expansion, according to data gathered by the Guttmacher Institute, a research group that supports abortion rights. In 2017, medication abortion accounted for 39% percent of abortions, but by 2020 it had increased to become the most common method,

accounting for 53% of all abortions.

Experts have said the use of medication abortion has increased since the court overturned *Roe*.

When the drug was initially approved, the FDA limited its use to up to seven weeks of pregnancy. It also required three in-person office visits: the first to administer mifepristone, the next to administer the second drug, misoprostol, and the third to address any complications. It also required a doctor's supervision and a reporting system for any serious consequences of the drug.

If the appeals court's action stands, those would again be the terms under which mifepristone could be dispensed for now.

At the core of the Texas lawsuit is the allegation that the FDA's initial approval of mifepristone was flawed because the agency did not adequately review safety risks.

Mifepristone has been used by millions of women over the past 23 years. While less drastic than completely overturning the drug's approval, the latest ruling still represents a stark challenge to the FDA's authority overseeing how prescription drugs are used in the U.S. The ruling late Wednesday overturned multiple decisions made by FDA regulators after years of scientific review.

Common side effects with mifepristone include cramping, bleeding, nausea, headache and diarrhea. In rare cases, women can experience excess bleeding that requires surgery to stop.

Still, in loosening restrictions on mifepristone, FDA regulators cited "exceedingly low rates of serious adverse events."

More than 5.6 million women in the U.S. had used the drug as of June 2022, according to the FDA. In that period, the agency received 4,200 reports of complications in women, or less than one tenth of 1% of women who took the drug. □



## El Chapo sons among 28 Sinaloa cartel members charged by U.S.

By L. WHITEHURST and  
CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department on Friday announced charges against more than two dozen members of Mexico's powerful Sinaloa cartel, including sons of notorious drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, in a sprawling fentanyl-trafficking investigation.

The three Guzman sons charged Ovidio Guzmán López, Jesús Alfredo Guzmán Salazar and Iván Archivaldo Guzmán Salazar are known as the Chapitos, or little Chapos, and have earned a reputation as the more violent and aggressive faction of the cartel.

Of the three, only Guzmán López is in custody, in Mexico. Attorney General Merrick Garland, standing alongside Drug Enforcement Administration chief Anne Milgram and other top federal prosecutors, unveiled the indictments in three districts aimed at hitting the cartel's global network. The defendants span a broad swath of a complex manufacturing and supply network. They include Chinese and Guatemalan citizens accused of supplying precursor chemicals required to make fentanyl, as well as



Attorney General Merrick Garland, center, speaks during a news conference at the Justice Department in Washington, Friday, April 14, 2023, on significant international drug trafficking enforcement action.

Associated Press

those suspected of running drug labs in Mexico and others accused of providing security, weapons and illicit financing for the drug trafficking operation. The wide-ranging case comes as the U.S. remains in the grip of a devastating overdose crisis largely by fentanyl poisonings. Nearly 107,000 Americans died of drug overdoses in the U.S. in 2021, a record-setting number. Fentanyl seizures by U.S. Customs and Border Protection have increased by more than 400% since

2019, officials said, and this fiscal year's seizures have already surpassed the total for all of 2022. Most of the fentanyl trafficked in the United States comes from the Sinaloa cartel, the Drug Enforcement Administration says. "Families and communities across our country are being devastated by the fentanyl epidemic," Garland said. "We will never forget those who bear responsibility for this tragedy. And we will never stop working to hold them accountable

for their crimes in the United States." The Sinaloa cartel's notorious drug lord, known as El Chapo, was convicted in 2019 of running an industrial-scale smuggling operation. At Guzman's trial, prosecutors said evidence gathered since the late 1980s showed he and his murderous cartel made billions of dollars by smuggling tons of cocaine, heroin, meth and marijuana into the U.S. A defiant Guzman accused the federal judge in his case of making a mockery of the U.S. justice

system and claimed he was denied a fair trial. In outlining the charges Friday, Garland described the violence of the Sinaloa cartel and how its members have tortured perceived enemies, including Mexican law enforcement officials. That has included people fed to tigers owned by Guzman's sons, sometimes while the victims were still alive, Garland said. Eight of those charged have been arrested and remain in the custody of law enforcement officials in Colombia, Greece, Guatemala and the U.S., Milgram said. The U.S. government is offering rewards for several others charged in the case, including up to \$10 million for Guzman's other two sons. Friday's indictments were filed in New York, Illinois, and Washington, D.C. U.S. government officials are pressing Chinese officials to do more to stem the shipment of those chemicals. With Washington-Beijing relations strained, the Biden administration says it has looked to allies in Europe, the Middle East and elsewhere to make clear to China that the issue is a global problem, according to senior Biden administration officials who briefed reporters following the announcement of the indictment. □

## Supreme Court lets challenges to federal agencies go forward

By JESSICA GRESKO  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court is allowing challenges to the structure of two federal agencies to go forward in federal court. The high court ruled unanimously Friday to allow challenges to the structures of the Federal Trade Commission and the Securities and Exchange Commission to go forward in federal court. Lower courts had split on whether those challenges could proceed.

In one case, the FTC had brought an enforcement action against Axon Enterprise, the Arizona-based

company best known for developing the Taser, arguing that its purchase of its competitor Viewu for approximately \$13 million was improper. The other case involved an SEC enforcement action against Michelle Cochran, a certified public accountant. Axon and Cochran responded by suing in federal court and arguing that the structure of the FTC and SEC respectively are unconstitutional. Each said that the administrative law judges that oversee enforcement actions are insufficiently accountable to the president, in violation of separa-

tion-of-powers principles in the Constitution. Both lawsuits were initially dismissed. Axon and Cochran appealed and while a federal appeals court in California said Axon's lawsuit could not go forward, a federal appeals court based in New Orleans said Cochran's case could move ahead. Justice Elena Kagan wrote in an opinion that the question for the court was whether federal courts can "resolve the parties' constitutional challenges to the Commissions' structure." "The answer is yes," she wrote, saying federal courts are not barred



The Federal Trade Commission building in Washington is pictured on Jan. 28, 2015.

Associated Press

from "entertaining these extraordinary claims." The cases the court ruled in are Axon Enterprise v. Fed-

eral Trade Commission, 21-86, and Securities and Exchange Commission et. al. v. Cochran, 21-1239. □



# Cuba expects to resume U.S. deportation flights this month

By **REBECCA SANTANA and ELLIOT SPAGAT**

**Associated Press**

**BETHESDA, Md. (AP) —**

Cuba plans to resume accepting deportation flights from the United States this month, a Cuban official said, echoing U.S. concerns about the highest levels of Cuban migration in six decades.

Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, Cuba's deputy foreign minister, said flights are expected before the U.S. ends coronavirus pandemic-related restrictions on asylum on May 11, which is widely projected to increase the number of people seeking entry to the U.S. at the U.S.-Mexico border.

The diplomat spoke in an interview with The Associated Press at the Cuban ambassador's residence outside Washington after what he called "a productive meeting" with U.S. Department of Homeland Security officials to discuss migration. "We have a lot of common understanding, both parties, the United States and Cuba, about the nature of the problem," he said.

Fernandez de Cossio said there was no agreement on the frequency of flights, which will depend on U.S. and Cuban capacity. But he said there was no reason they can't return to



**Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Fernandez de Cossio is interviewed by The Associated Press on Friday, April 22, 2022, in Washington.**

**Associated Press**

pre-pandemic levels of about twice a month. The last flight was in December 2020.

The Department of Homeland Security did not immediately respond to a request for comment Friday. Cubans were stopped nearly 43,000 times at the U.S. border with Mexico in December, becoming one of the largest nationalities entering the United States. Numbers plummeted in January after President Joe Biden's administration announced that Cubans could fly to the U.S. if they

applied online and had a financial sponsor and that they would be expelled back to Mexico if they crossed the border illegally.

"We're going to see if we can get one in the coming weeks and then to make that regular so that people can be easily removed, not to Mexico but directly to Cuba," Fernandez de Cossio said late Thursday.

He said that numbers of Cubans fleeing on boats, particularly high-powered vessels associated with smugglers, have been rising after a fall earlier this year

and that more Cubans were leaving the country to fly to Nicaragua as tourists, typically the first step for Cubans to travel by land to the U.S.-Mexico border.

Fernandez de Cossio said the changes announced in January under which people from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela can apply for humanitarian parole to come to the U.S. have been successful in reducing the numbers of Cubans trying to cross the U.S.-Mexico border. But he cautioned that it wasn't a long-term fix.

"It would be irresponsible for us or naive to think that this will be sustainable in the long term because there will always be a limit on the amount of visas," he said.

It is unclear how many flights the U.S. will need to mount a serious deterrent to Cuban migration.

The two countries have planned five removal flights since November, but each was called off for various operational issues, said Fernandez de Cossio, emphasizing that Cuba has supported the flights in theory.

U.S. Border Patrol agents stopped more migrants last year than at any other time on record, largely driven by arrivals of people from Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua, countries with strained diplomatic relations. It has been extremely difficult for the U.S. to sponsor deportation flights to those countries, forcing the Biden administration to turn to Mexico for help hosting the migrants. The Biden administration has gone into overdrive preparing for the end of Title 42, the public health authority under which migrants have been expelled from the U.S. more than 2.7 million times without an opportunity to seek asylum on the grounds of preventing the spread of COVID-19. □

# Minneapolis OKs dawn Muslim prayer call, 1st for big U.S. city

**MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (AP) —**

Minneapolis will allow broadcasts of the Muslim call to prayer at all hours, becoming the first major U.S. city to allow the announcement or "adhan" to be heard over speakers five times a day, year-round.

The Minneapolis City Council unanimously agreed Thursday to amend the city's noise ordinance, which had prevented dawn and late evening calls at certain times of the year due to noise restrictions, the Minneapolis Star Tribune reported.

The vote came during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

"The Constitution doesn't sleep at night," said Jaylani

Hussein, executive director of the Minnesota chapter



**Yusuf Abdulle, standing, director of the Islamic Association of North America, prays with fellow Muslims at the Abubakar As-Saddique Islamic Center in Minneapolis on Thursday, May 12, 2022.**

**Associated Press**

of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, after the vote. He said the action in Minneapolis shows the world that a "nation founded on freedom of religion makes good on its promise."

Minneapolis has had a flourishing population of East African immigrants since at least the 1990s, and mosques now are common. Three of 13 members of the council identify as Muslim. The decision drew no organized community opposition. Mayor Jacob Frey is expected to sign the measure next week.

"Minneapolis has become a city for all religions," said

Imam Mohammed Dukuly of Masjid An-Nur mosque in Minneapolis, who was among several Muslim leaders who witnessed the vote.

Three years ago, city officials worked with the Dar Al-Hijrah mosque to allow the adhan to be broadcast outdoors five times daily during Ramadan. Prayers are said when light appears at dawn, at noon, at mid- to late afternoon, at sunset and when the night sky appears.

In Minnesota, dawn arrives as early as before 5:30 a.m. in summer, while sunset at the solstice happens after 9 p.m. □



# China vows not to sell arms to any party in Ukraine war

**BEIJING (AP)**— China won't sell weapons to either side in the war in Ukraine, the country's foreign minister said Friday, responding to Western concerns that Beijing could provide military assistance to Russia.

China has maintained that it is neutral in the conflict, while backing Russia politically, rhetorically and economically at a time when Western nations have imposed punishing sanctions and sought to isolate Moscow for its invasion of its neighbor.

Qin Gang is the highest-level Chinese official to make such an explicit statement about arms sales to Russia. He added that China would also regulate the export of items with dual civilian and military use.

"Regarding the export of military items, China adopts a prudent and responsible attitude," Qin said at a news conference alongside visiting German counterpart Annalena Baerbock.

"China will not provide weapons to relevant parties of the conflict, and manage and control the exports of dual-use items in



Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang speaks during a joint press conference with German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing Friday, April 14, 2023. Associated Press

accordance with laws and regulations."

The minister also reiterated China's willingness to help find a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

At the same news conference, Qin also blamed Taiwan's government for heightened regional tensions after Beijing held large-scale military drills in an attempt to intimidate

the island it claims as its own territory.

In February, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the U.S. had intelligence suggesting China was considering providing arms and ammunition to Russia and warned that such involvement in the Kremlin's war effort would be a "serious problem."

The White House on Friday

welcomed Qin's pledge that China won't supply weapons to Russia, but expressed a measure of trepidation.

"As we've said all along, we don't believe it's in China's best interest to move in that direction. We will continue to monitor closely," White House National Security Council spokeswoman Adrienne Watson

said in a statement.

European leaders have issued similar warnings, even as they visited China, and the European Union's foreign policy chief lashed out at Beijing, saying its support of Russia during the invasion was "a blatant violation" of its United Nations commitments.

In her remarks, Baerbock also referred to China's role as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, saying it bore a special responsibility for helping end the conflict.

"But I have to wonder why the Chinese positioning so far does not include a call for the aggressor, Russia, to stop the war," she said.

"We all know that President (Vladimir) Putin would have the opportunity to do so at any time, and the people in Ukraine would like nothing more than to finally be able to live in peace again."

A visit to Moscow last month by Chinese leader Xi Jinping underscored how Beijing is increasingly becoming the senior partner in the relationship as it provides Russia with an economic lifeline and political cover. □

## U.N.: As many as 400,000 migrants may cross Darien Gap in 2023

**PANAMA CITY (AP)** — Two U.N. groups said Thursday that the number of migrants crossing the dangerous Darien Gap between Colombia and Panama could soar to as many as 400,000 this year.

That would represent a huge increase from the 250,000 migrants estimated to have crossed the roadless, jungle-clad route in 2022. The U.N. agencies for refugees and migration said in a report that nearly 100,000 people may have already made the crossing so far this year, six times more than in the similar period of last year.

If that trend keeps up, it could mean many more migrants seeking to reach the United States through Central America and Mex-

ico.

The groups called it "an unprecedented movement (of people) through the Americas."

The United States pledged its forces will assist their Colombian and Panamanian counterparts with intelligence gathering to dismantle smuggling rings operating in the Darien Gap, which is a key route for migrants heading to the U.S. from South America, a senior Biden administration official said Wednesday.

The area is among the most dangerous portions of the long route to the U.S. borders. Migrants and international human rights groups have denounced sexual assaults, robberies and killings in the remote jungle. That's in addition to the

natural dangers posed by venomous snakes and rushing rivers.

U.S. forces could assist in targeting smugglers for arrest and locating "stash houses" where smugglers hold migrants, the official said, without specifying whether the U.S. forces involved would be military or civilian law enforcement.

The United States, Panama and Colombia had announced Tuesday an ambitious 60-day campaign to shut down the Darien Gap route.

The official said the 60-day period had not started yet and was still under consideration, but the effort is part of a broader campaign to prepare for the end of pandemic-era restrictions on applying for asylum at

the U.S. border set to expire May 11.

The same obstacles that make it a treacherous crossing for migrants will make it impossible for au-

thorities to completely cut off. It is about 60 miles of roadless dense jungle used by organized criminal groups for smuggling drugs and people. □



Migrants, mostly Venezuelans, cross a river during their journey through the Darien Gap from Colombia into Panama, hoping to reach the U.S., Oct. 15, 2022. Associated Press



# Red Cross: Yemen rebels, Saudi coalition begin prisoner swap

By **AHMED AL-HAJ** and **SAMY MAGDY**

**Associated Press**

**SANAA, Yemen (AP)** — An exchange of more than 800 prisoners linked to Yemen's long-running war began on Friday, the International Committee for the Red Cross said. The United Nations-brokered deal, in the works for months, comes amid concerted diplomatic efforts to negotiate an end to the conflict. The three-day operation will be the most significant prisoner exchange in Yemen since the Saudi-led coalition and their rivals, the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels, released more than 1,000 detainees in October 2020.

Thousands of people are still believed to be held as prisoners of war since the conflict erupted, with others missing. But Fabrizio Carboni, the Red Cross' regional director, said the release "gives a sense of momentum" for efforts to end the war. "This will show that there is no way back to violence," Carboni told journalists. The Red Cross later said that a total of 318 detainees were released on Friday. In Sanaa, the Houthi-held capital of Yemen, dozens of former prisoners de-



Houthi prisoners are greeted as they arrive to Sanaa airport, Friday, April 14, 2023.

**Associated Press**

scended from a plane to a marching band and traditional Yemeni dancers, wearing ribbons with the colors of the Yemeni flag. Family members and a reception line of Houthi political leaders greeted the released with hugs and kisses. An injured man was seen supported by medical workers. Carboni acknowledged some former prisoners needed medical care before making their flight, but "nothing out of the ordinary." Meanwhile, prisoners re-

leased by the rebel Houthis took flights to Aden, the seat of the country's internationally recognized government allied with Saudi Arabia. Two rounds of simultaneous flights Friday between Aden and Sanaa transferred the prisoners. As part of the exchange, flights will transport prisoners from government-controlled cities inside Yemen and Saudi Arabia to Sanaa, said Majed Fadail, a deputy minister for human rights for Yemen's govern-

ment. Yemen's conflict began in 2014 when the Houthis seized Sanaa and much of the country's north. The internationally recognized government fled to the south and then into exile in Saudi Arabia. The Houthi takeover prompted a Saudi-led coalition to intervene months later and the conflict turned into a regional proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran, with the United States long involved on the periphery, provid-

ing intelligence assistance to the kingdom. However, international criticism over Saudi airstrikes killing civilians saw the U.S. pull back its support.

The war has killed more than 150,000 people, including fighters and civilians, and created one of the world's worst humanitarian disasters.

The prisoner exchange had been scheduled to start earlier in the week but was delayed because of apparent logistical reasons. The deal calls for the Houthis to release more than 180 prisoners, including Saudi and Sudanese troops fighting with the Saudi-led coalition, and four Yemeni journalists. The journalists were detained in recent years and sentenced to death by a Houthi-controlled court in a trial described by Amnesty International as "grossly unfair."

The deal also includes the release of top military officials held by the Houthis since the start of the war. Among those released Friday were Maj. Gen. Mahmoud al-Subaihi, who was the defense minister when the war erupted, and Nasser Mansour Hadi, the brother of former Yemeni President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi. □

# Hezbollah chief: Israel didn't hit Hamas in Lebanon strikes

By **AHMAD EL-KHATIB**

**Associated Press**

**BEIRUT (AP)** — The leader of Lebanon's militant He-



Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah greets his supporters through a screen via a video link from a secret place, during a rally to mark Jerusalem day, in a southern suburb of Beirut, Lebanon, Friday, April 14, 2023.

**Associated Press**

zbollah group on Friday claimed that Israel did not hit Hamas or Hezbollah targets in last week's strikes on southern Lebanon. The strikes last Friday in south Lebanon came a day after militants fired nearly three dozen rockets from there at Israel, wounding two people and causing some property damage. The Israeli military said it had targeted installations of Hamas, the Palestinian militant group, in southern Lebanon. Speaking at an ceremony in Beirut marking "Jerusalem Day," or al-Quds Day after the city's Arabic name an annual show of

support for the Palestinians held on the last Friday of every Islamic holy month of Ramadan Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah called the Israeli statements "a barefaced lie" and that "no Hezbollah or Hamas infrastructure was struck." Rather, he said, the Israelis hit "banana groves" and a water irrigation channel. There was no immediate comment from Israel. While Israeli military officials have not said they hit any Hezbollah targets, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a speech Monday said Israel had targeted both Hamas and Hezbollah infrastructure.

Nasrallah called this "the biggest lie." According to Associated Press reporters on the ground, several missiles fired by Israeli warplanes struck an open field in the town of Qalili, near the Palestinian refugee camp of Rashidiyeh, close to the coastal southern city of Tyre. Others struck a bridge and power transformer in the nearby town of Maaliya and a farm on the outskirts of Rashidiyeh, killing several sheep. No human deaths were reported. It could not be independently verified if any other locations were hit. □



# The figures are in: In 2022, Tourism Receipts contributed 4.4 billion florins to our economy; growth of 18% compared to 2019

(Oranjestad)—Every quarter, the Central Bank of Aruba observes the Tourism Receipts (or Tourism Credits), which shows the amount of money brought in by tourism. The Aruba Tourism Authority (A.T.A) had set the goal to recover with 95% in this economic indicator for 2022. Recently, the Central Bank has published the latest figures from the last quarter in 2022. This illustrates a recovery by 118% in Tourism Receipts in 2022 compared to 2019.

The importance of this indicator in terms of the recovery in the island's tourism must be emphasized, seeing as this is one of the indicators that does not illustrate the number of visitors to Aruba, but the amount of money generated through these visits. Tourism Receipts is the direct profit generated through tourism and excludes the indirect income that Aruba's economy generated thanks to the tourist industry.

## March 2023 compared to 2019 and 2022

In the month of March 2023, the island received a total of 109,295 stay-over visitors. Comparing this to March 2019—which was the last normal year for tourism before the pandemic, it can be concluded that Aruba recovered 102% of its profits from March 2019, which indicates a growth of 2%. When comparing March 2023 with March 2022, the recovery rate is at 114%, illustrating a growth of 14%.

## Markets and categories of accommodation

In March of this year, 84.8% of the total stay-over visitors on Aruba came from North

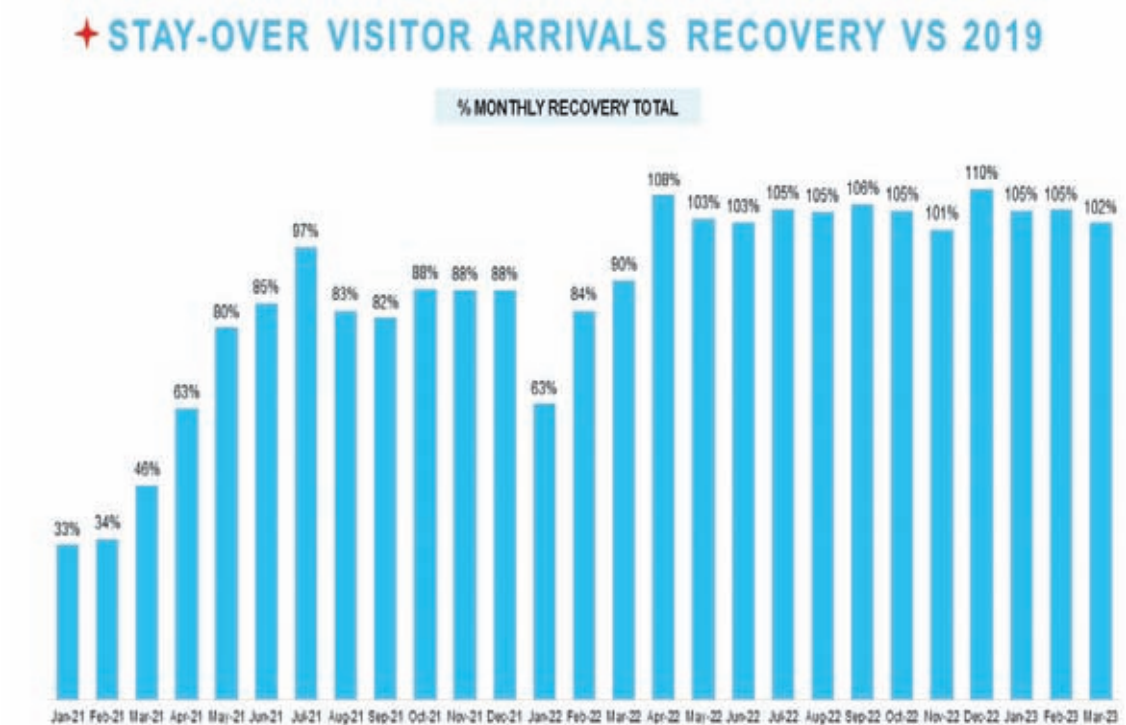
America, 5.7% from Europe, 7.2% from Latino America and 2.3% came from other parts of the world. Looking at the categories of accommodation, March 2023 saw 36.6% of visitors who stayed in High-Rise hotels, 8.9% stayed in Low-Rise hotels, 25.2% stayed in Time-shares and 29.3% stayed in other types of accommodation, also known as vacation rentals.

## Vacation Rentals

Is it important to mention that A.T.A has access to a platform where the number of houses, apartments and villas used as vacation rentals, as well as the average price per night for these accommodations can be seen. Furthermore, A.T.A also has access on the same platform to an overview of the occupation of these vacation rentals and the profit that these generate.

When comparing March 2023 with March 2022, the figures show that the average price for this type of accommodation grew by 12%; from the average price of \$237 per night in March 2022 to an average price of \$266 per night in 2023. When comparing March 2023 with March 2029, figures show that the average price for vacation rentals grew by 45%; from an average price of \$184 per night in March 2019 to \$266 in March 2023.

Comparisons of March 2023 and March 2022 also show that the average occupation in vacation rental reduced with 1 percentage point; from an average of 63.7% in March 2022 to an average of 62.7% in



2023. In 2019, the average percentage was 43.6% compared to the 62.7% of March of this year. This shows a growth of 19.1%.

In terms of profit, comparisons between March 2023 and March 2022 show that this category generated a

growth by 24%. Comparisons between March 2023 and March 2019 show a growth of 156%.□

Vacation Rentals					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
ADR	\$184.00	\$200.00	\$220.00	\$237.00	\$266.00
Occupancy	43.6%	35.6%	45.6%	63.7%	62.7%
Revenue	\$7,427,712	\$5,312,008	\$8,819,847	\$15,317,752	\$18,982,857

Source: A.T.A. (Transparent)

**The Grand Fish**

The Best Fresh Seafood on The Island

**Free Glass of Wine**

with this coupon!!

Open from 11am till 10pm Closed on Tuesday

Tel. +297-280.1515 | Taratata Road 15 unit #1



**BINGO IS BACK EVERY THURSDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY!**



**SUPER SATURDAY!**

**SUNDAY FUNDAY**

Super 4-Card BINGO starting at 1pm!

\$7 for 4-Card BINGO | 8 Games to Play

**\$1,500 in Cash Prizes**

**SPECIAL PROGRESSIVE GAME**

Jackpot within 50 Calls | 51 Calls or more \$111

Additional \$500 Cash Prize in our Monthly Early Bird Drawing when you purchase your card before noon!

**THE SHOPS AT ALHAMBRA CASINO**

Offering a wide variety of Retail & Dining Outlets, Salon & Spa Services, Souvenirs and more.

Dunkin Donuts | Baskin Robbins | Fusion Piano & Wine Bar

Hungry Piranha | Twist of Flavors | Juan Valdez Café

The Brownstone Ribs & Seafood

Coming Soon: Auntie Anne's Pretzels



Open daily 10am to 3am | J.E. Irausquin Blvd #47 | 583.5000 | [casinoalhambra.com](http://casinoalhambra.com)

Play Responsibly. Visit [www.gamblersanonymous.org](http://www.gamblersanonymous.org) if you or someone you know has a gambling problem.



## Get it ALL done at Do It Center and Super Do It Center & Groceries



**Noord – Sometimes all we need is one place where we can do all our shopping at once. Well, Do it center and Super Do it Center Groceries has it all. This is the largest, local owned Do it Center in the Caribbean and best of all a 100% locally owned family business.**

### How it all began

It was 1938 when Mr. Eric Ponson started his journey at General Store. Ponson did not hesitate and decided to buy General Store. Buying a store and thus going from employee to owner of a business with a debt of 11.000 guilders was not an easy task.

As the saying goes: "Behind every successful man, is a strong

woman". In the case of Ponson, this was no different. As General Store progressed and slowly became successful, Mrs. Irene Ponson, came in to assist her husband. Irene Ponson is a visionary, she knew exactly where and how to invest and within a short amount of time in 1970, General Store moved to a better location at the Steenweg. This allowed for a lot more merchandise, products and employees. Supply and demand was as such, that General Store became the number 1 electrical business. Business kept going so well that the location at the Steenweg became too small and was moved later to Dakota Shopping Paradise and later to Pedro Gallego Straat. With this move, an expansion was decided upon and an electronics

store in Savaneta was opened. General Store still being very successful was ready for more growth.

Ricky, Kenneth, Corine and Frans are the fruits of this marriage. Kenneth and Frans however, decided to further develop their father's legacy and continued with their mother's dream to expand the business. An expansion not in square feet only, but in merchandise as well. A great opportunity presented itself when the Ponson family was able to buy a piece of property across from the airport. In 2007 the Ponson family moved into their brand new and huge building

After a successful opening and expansion, Kenneth and Frans who inherited their mother's vision, decided that General Store was ready for yet another expansion. With the support of Mr. Tom Barfell and management of Do it Best in the States, the construction of Do it Center commenced.

Fast forward to today. A Do it Center in Aruba, with more than 50.000 top of the line items for interior as well exterior use, building materials, STO products and a top of the line grocery store. Perseverance, responsibility, vision and the courage to invest have made Ponson's General Store as successful as it is today.

### Super Do It Center Shaba & Groceries

Located in Shaba, Noord. This is the last sibling of the Do It Center family. Here you will be able to find anything you are looking for. The building is divided into several departments from home to hardware to groceries. Everything under one roof.

Groceries? Visit the fully stocked supermarket with fresh fruits and vegetables and high class meat selections. Highly known products and brands are here for you to grab. Every week Do It Center Groceries offers its weekly special on selected items. Weekly specials are very popular and a perfect chance for you to buy your favorite products at a reduced price.

### Need a home makeover?

Do not skip the furniture department "Leenbakker". Here, you will find a divine collection of European furniture, worldwide known for their modern and stylish features for your bedroom, bathroom, living room or kitchen. For your garden they have a wide selection of durable furniture specially made for our tropical climate. Take a walk around and find some treasures. Find the perfect accessory for your house, fitted for your personality and style. Modern, elegant, retro industrial, whatever your style is you will definitely find something for your personal taste.

Do it Center Shaba is open from Monday to Saturday from 8AM to 8PM and on Sunday's from 9AM to 6PM.

For more information go to [www.doit.aw](http://www.doit.aw). ☐





**BINGO IS BACK EVERY THURSDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY!**

**Free Shirt  
Sunday!**

Get a **FREE** Alhambra  
T-Shirt when you earn  
**250 Slot Points** on Sunday with  
your **Players' Club card!**

**THE SHOPS  
AT ALHAMBRA CASINO**

Offering a wide variety of Retail & Dining Outlets,  
Salon & Spa Services, Souvenirs and more.

Dunkin Donuts | Baskin Robbins | Fusion Piano & Wine Bar  
Hungry Piranha | Twist of Flavors | Juan Valdez Café

The Brownstone Ribs & Seafood  
Coming Soon: Auntie Anne's Pretzels

**Alhambra**  
CASINO AND SHOPS

Open daily 10am to 3am | J.E. Irausquin Blvd #47 | 583.5000 | casinoalhambra.com

Play Responsibly. Visit [www.gamblersanonymous.org](http://www.gamblersanonymous.org) if you or someone you know has a gambling problem.



## Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently recognized the Distinguished Ambassadors of Aruba. Presenting the Ambassadors with the Distinguished certification as a token of appreciation.

The Distinguished certification is granted to ambassadors to recognize, the loyalty, friendship, and visits to the island of Aruba. Distinguished Honorees have been choosing Aruba as their preferred vacation destination for more than 10 years consecutively. The Honoring certification program has three levels, which are divided according to the quantity of consecutive years visiting the island.

### Honoring Levels:

Distinguished Ambassadors: 10+ years

Goodwill Ambassadors: 20+ years

Emerald Ambassadors: 35+ years

### Honorees were:

Goodwill Ambassadors 20+ years:

David & Deborah Noonan resident of Massachusetts, United States (have been coming to Aruba for 13 years).

Ms. Olga Ruiz representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and members of Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa bestowed the certification of the Distinguished Ambassadors. The honorees were presented with the Distinguished Ambassador Certificate and memorable gifts.

On behalf of the Aruba Government, we would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to Mr. & Mrs. Noonan. Thank you for making Aruba your favored vacation destination for so many years. We are so honored to have had such wonderful visitors over all these years! Aruba is without a doubt your home away from home!

Top reason for returning to Aruba, provided by the honorees were:

Mr. & Mrs. Noonan reasons:

Weather

Manchebo people

Restaurants

Beaches

Friendly people. ☐



**Aruba Today is delighted to share to its readers a new segment called "Beauty and the Beach", where we take a minute to honor our guests who have decided to spend their vacation on our beautiful and warm island.**

In this edition, we'd like to give a shout out to Bryan and Lisa Bancroft from Connecticut, U.S.A. They come to Aruba every year and stay for 4 months straight; one can even call them part-time Arubans! Aruba is always proud to host all families and guests. We at Aruba Today encourage any visitor of the island to send in their pictures and/or messages; who knows? You might get on the cover!

*This segment is sponsored by Alhambra Casino and Shops.*



## Today Is Going To Be A Good Day

**Here's why:** Aruba Today collected some things to do **BEYOND** the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

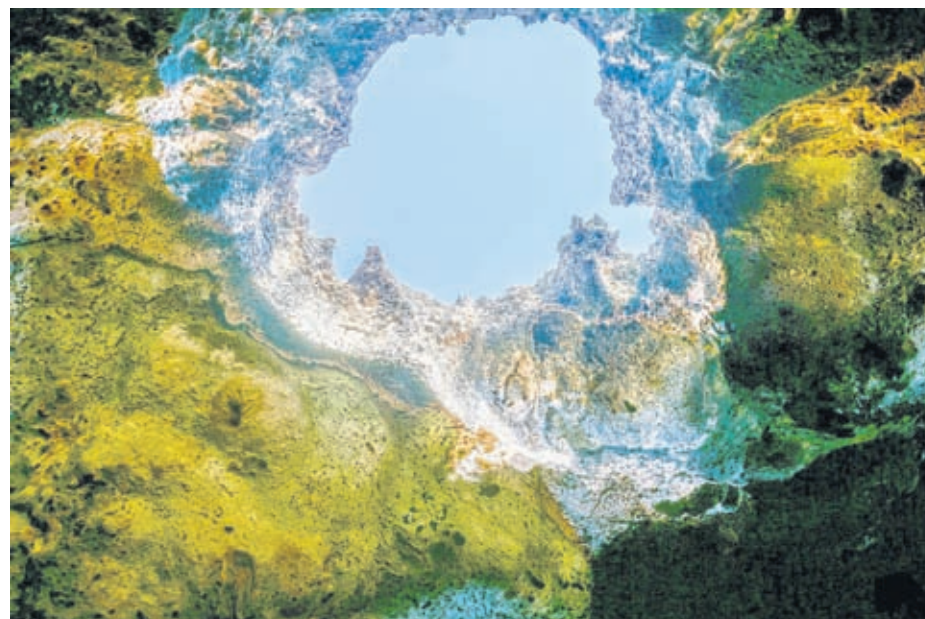
### Nature Calls

The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the

historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whiptail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center. For more information, visit the website [www.arubanationalpark.org](http://www.arubanationalpark.org)

### The Lighthouse

No, you would not think of this as a hidden gem. The California Light-



house is actually one of the most known highlights in Aruba and many repeated guests most probably took the ride uphill already. But, there is a significant change to this tower. Since September 2016 you can climb the top. In 2015

Stichting Monumentenfonds started the restoration of the California Lighthouse. The project finished in September 2016 and the Lighthouse is now open for visitors to enjoy the beautiful view from the top. The construction of the California Lighthouse started in 1915. The name 'California' came from a vessel of the West India Company and Pacific Steamship Co. called 'California' that shipwrecked in the area in 1891. Therefore they came up with the idea of building a lighthouse that could indicate the island's eastern tip to ships with its light. [www.arubalighthouse.com](http://www.arubalighthouse.com) will give you more information.

### Kayak in the Mangroves

Mangel Halto at Savaneta is definitely a place not to miss out on. The beautiful beach with the natural mangroves is simply a beauty, but if you are into a more active way to enjoy the nature: take a kayak. While you are doing some workout -as it might get a little windy and rough-, you will see the island from a different perspective. You can even make a stop to do some snorkeling at the reef. Its fun, it's healthy and for sure something else. There are several companies that offer kayak tours, we had good experience with The Shack Kayak Tours Aruba, find them on Facebook. □





## Easter on Aruba: A tradition of camping

ORANJESTAD—You may notice during the first week of April that there are a lot of trailers and tents parked right on the outskirts of beaches around the island. This is a long-standing tradition during Easter weekend, where families and friends gather in large groups and set up camp at the beach.

Camping week in Aruba stretches from April 2nd to April 16th and may be nothing like what you're used to seeing. Though groups do sleep in tents and spend the entire week at their campsite, most sites have extra facilities. These facilities include trailer-kitchens and portable toilets, making camping much more comfortable—and perhaps even more luxurious. Though camping in itself is a general custom on the island, each family/group may have their own set of traditions and routines when they go camping, like the Ras family from Paradera.

Before setting up camp, planning starts with procuring (legal) documents. These include camping permits given by the Police Corps (KPA) and contracts



for toilet rentals. Do note that camping permits are especially important, because the police are bound to patrol the camping areas during the week. After obtaining a permit, groups assemble to look for and hold a spot at the beach. This is why you may notice some chairs, traffic cones or even ropes stretching across the beaches on Saturday or Sunday before camping week.

Next on the list is planning the menu. The Ras family usually plans hot dogs and burgers for Thursday, and fish for Good Friday. Other than that, soup is a must, chicken and rice (Arroz con pollo) is an Aruban favorite, and for the kids, snacks like pastechi (meat pies), kroket (croquettes), cheese balls, and deviled eggs are necessary to keep them full and energized while they play all day in the blazing sun. When camping with extended family or friends, usually everyone pitches in with food and drinks. As the Ras family matriarch said: "There always someone in the kitchen cooking something up."

In terms of camp activities, these can also vary from group to group, but one activity you will not miss anywhere is dominos. Usually, every camp site has one or two domino tables ready for use, where the men usually gather and

play for hours. Other than that, both children and adults play 'Mens Erger Je Niet' (Ludo), Bingo and other board games, or go fishing with lines and nets. On Easter Sunday, the main activity for everyone, and especially the children, is egg hunting.

The Ras family matriarch told our reporter the children traditionally decorate their own eggs before these are hidden around the camping site. They make sure to boil these eggs first, so that no messy accidents happen when painting these. After the kids find their eggs, they are usually cracked open and eaten. But the fun of egg hunting is not exclusive to children; adults may also participate too. For this, the Ras family sometimes hid golden eggs around the area, each holding big prizes, like a bottle of wine, money etc. Besides this, families may celebrate Easter weekend by walking the "Caminda

di Cruz" (Sorrowful Way or Via Dolorosa) to the Alto Vista Chapel located in the northern part of the island or by going to the 3 o'clock church sermon. Some groups that do not go to church but still want to pay respect on Good Friday may hold a moment of silence when the clock strikes 3pm.

And after two weeks of camping, this tradition comes to a close for the rest of the year. Groups deconstruct their sites and leave the beach premises, excited for next Easter, where they can set up camp again and enjoy the feeling of community on the beaches of Aruba.

As said before, camping during Easter vacation is a long-standing tradition for the community of Aruba. This is something that almost everyone on the island grew up with, and it remains a special occasion that feels authentic and our own! □





# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

## ACROSS

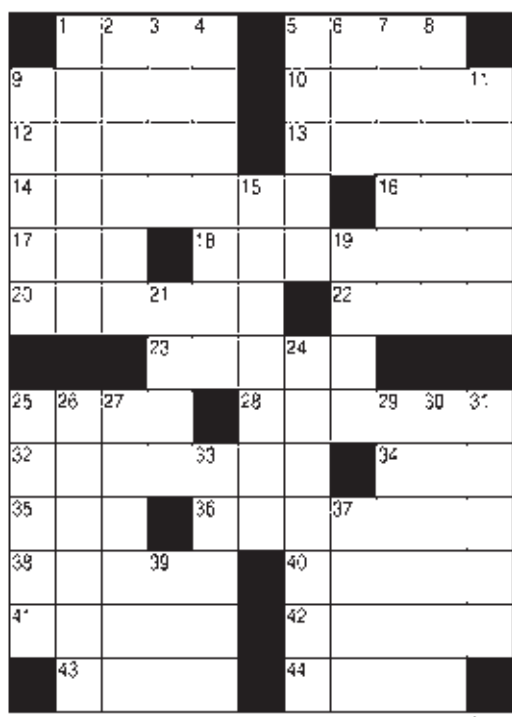
- 42 Anarchic events  
1 Mausoleum  
5 Tater toppers  
9 Racer Andretti  
10 Surgery tool  
12 Even a little  
13 Be penitent  
14 Tear up the dance floor  
16 Card spot  
17 G.I. fare  
18 "Don't be ridiculous!"  
20 Give one's okay  
22 Sole  
23 Passionate dance  
25 Diva's piece  
28 Start  
32 "Beat it!"  
34 Verb for you  
35 Gardner of film  
36 Avenge oneself  
38 Like the icecaps  
40 Choose  
41 Select group

## DOWN

- 1 Spuds  
2 Gives an address  
3 Not too spicy  
4 Deli buy  
5 Bias  
6 Contrived  
7 Annual golf event  
8 Turn-down  
9 Molten stuff  
11 Answer  
15 Sign of a healthy dog, maybe  
19 Plant part  
21 List-ending abbr.  
24 Edges of alleys  
25 Clearly stunned  
26 Rise up  
27 Venezia's nation  
29 Get for less  
30 Puts up  
31 Campout sights  
33 Story meanies  
37 Lamb's alias  
39 Cash dispenser



Yesterday's answer



4-15

A X Y D L B A A X R  
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's. X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-15

## CRYPTOQUOTE

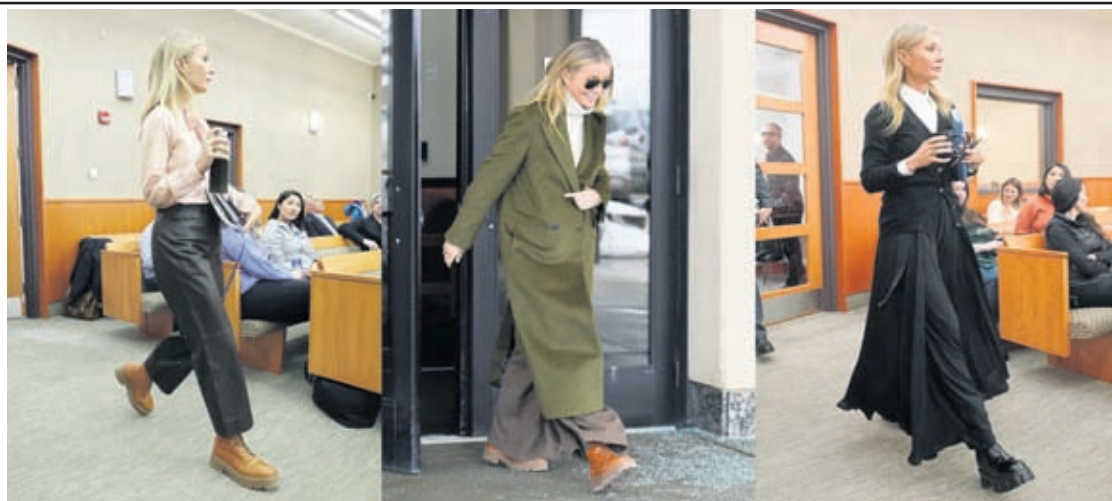
C Z H X Q Z R P Q U H V

V Y T F H Z O J H N Q R J Q

U Y I P M B H J H R B H

X H Z M J C

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: YOUR WIDE EYES ARE THE ONLY LIGHT I KNOW FROM EXTINGUISHED CONSTELLATIONS. — PABLO NERUDA



This combination of photos show actor Gwyneth Paltrow at the courthouse for her trial in Park City, Utah on March 28, 2023, from left, March 21, and on March 27.

Associated Press

## 'Quiet luxury': No flash, no logos, but big-time style

By LEANNE ITALIE  
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — They're the biggest of brands. But with no logos. And that's the whole point.

Call it stealth wealth, or quiet luxury. For the rich and those who aspire, logo-free fashion with out-sized price tags is having a moment at least among people who can spend in the face of higher inflation and a volatile economy. It's a come-and-go trend that, while spiking in the pandemic's wake, traces its roots as far back as the American industrialists of the 19th-century Gilded Age and France in the 1700s. And retailers are taking note, as are more designers looking to capture not only the rich but their wannabes, too. Think Hollywood nepo baby and Goop multimillionaire Gwyneth Paltrow and her head-to-toe Prada, luxurious cashmere sweaters and Celine boots during her week in a Utah courtroom in a dispute over a ski crash. She was a picture of neutral-toned designer duds, and those who know luxury easily spotted the brands behind her staid, logoless, very pricey ward-

robe. "When you know, you know, and that's sort of the point," says Robert Burke, a luxury retail consultant. "The people they care about, the people in their rooms, know exactly what they're wearing. And they're the only ones who matter."

## TV TRENDSETTERS

Cue HBO's hit "Succession," the story of the uber-rich, cutthroat Roys led by the snarly patriarch Logan. Costume designer Michelle Matland has created pricey yet stealth wardrobes unique to key characters as they have evolved, delighting fans who have followed her fashion breadcrumbs since the show's 2018 premiere.

"It shouldn't have bling quality," she says. "You're always going to have your, I guess, Kardashians you know, the people who wear things that draw attention. They may have the same amount of money, but different aspirations." The stealth fashion world is perfectly tailored dark suits, often bespoke; bare baseball caps with perfectly rounded rims; and neutral power pieces worn by the only female Roy sibling, Shiv. No logos

for the Roys and their jet set, though one important striver in their midst had to learn about stealth wealth the hard way. "It's incredibly accurate. Every time you look at it, it tells you exactly how rich you are," Shiv's outsider husband, Tom Wambsgans, tells Logan of the Patek Philippe he presents the billionaire early in "Succession." With a trademark mumble and nothing in the way of a thank you, Logan rebuffs, then gives away, the birthday gift emblazoned with the name of the company whose watches can sell for north of \$300,000. Fast-forward to the latest season, at yet another Logan birthday bash. This time it's Tom, still the groveler but a far savvier one, dising wannabe Bridget's display of luxury: a conspicuously huge \$2,890 Burberry tote in a plaid familiar to fans of the company, sans logo. "She's brought a ludicrously capacious bag," Tom snarls at his underling, Greg. "What's even in there, huh? Flat shoes for the subway? Her lunch pail? I mean, Greg, it's monstrous. It's gargantuan. You could take it camping. You could slide it across the floor after a bank job."

## SPLASHY TO CLASSIC

Paltrow, to be fair, has always been drawn to a sleek, minimalist luxury. But her recent trial wardrobe was blasted out on TV at a time when more brands are putting understated (yet pricey) tones and shapes on runways and shelves. □

**Honey Dolls**  
MASSAGE AND ESCORT SERVICE

**Beautiful Latin Girls**  
Pick-up & Delivery

Serving Men - Couple - Women - All Genders

+297 565-9535

WWW.PLEASUREINARUBA.COM

24/7



## N.J. charges itself with damaging land it was bound to protect



A red-shouldered hawk fluffs up its feathers and spreads wings to facilitate drying after a hunderstorm in Chattanooga, Tenn., on Dec. 31, 2021.

Associated Press

By WAYNE PARRY  
Associated Press

New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection has charged itself with damaging habitat for threatened and endangered birds that it was supposed to protect.

The work was designed to create habitat for one species of bird, but actually wound up destroying habitat for two others.

The department acknowledged it sent a violation notice and threatened penalties against its own Division of Fish and Wildlife regarding unauthorized work in February and March at the Glassboro Wildlife Management Area in Clayton, Gloucester County.

It was unclear how any penalties might work when the DEP is both the accuser and the accused. It also was not immediately clear whether any money might actually change hands. The department did not respond to questions about potential fines.

The work involved the clearing of vegetation and disturbance of soils on nearly 3 acres of what the state calls "exceptional resource value freshwater wetlands." Before the

work was done, this land was considered suitable habitat for the barred owl, which is listed as a threatened species, and the red-shouldered hawk, an endangered species.

The project also cleared and disturbed an additional 12 acres of land near wetlands known as transition areas, which also are protected.

The DEP refused Friday to discuss how the work happened without authorization.

On its website, the department wrote on Feb. 1 that

the work sought to create 21 acres of habitat for the American woodcock, a member of the sandpiper family that uses its long, narrow beak to forage for earthworms in damp soil. The project was designed to create "meadow habitat."

But in doing so, the state destroyed mature oak and pine forests in and near wetlands, and filled in some wetlands, four conservation groups said in a letter to the department in early March complaining about the work. The agen-

cy issued the violation notice on April 6.

"The wetland soil and flora that were previously undisturbed have been destroyed, and the mature forest that was already habitat for numerous rare species of plants and birds was clear-cut logged," the groups wrote. "All trees have been cut, and all stumps bulldozed."

Tom Gilbert, a leader of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, said, "This never should have happened. They must also take steps to improve their clearly inadequate internal review process and meaningfully engage the public."

Jaclyn Rhoads, assistant executive director of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, commended the state for owning up to its mistake, but said the DEP should provide a list of current projects on its website for public review. □



### HEALTH

#### DOCTOR ON DUTY

##### Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm  
Tel. 527 4000

##### San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours  
Tel. 524 8833

#### PHARMACY ON DUTY

##### Oranjestad:

Sta. Anna: Tel. 586 8181  
Seroe Preto: Tel. 584 4833

#### OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850  
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002  
Urgent Care 586 0448  
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic  
+297 588 0539

#### EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

#### TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

#### TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

#### AID FOUNDATIONS

FAVI- Visually Impaired  
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous  
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous  
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia  
Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes  
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention  
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

#### General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118



#### Editor

Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.  
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668  
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.  
Acc. #23951903  
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

#### Editors

Pilar Flores  
Richard Brooks  
Angenette Figuereo

#### Sales

Mark Gomes  
Sulaika Croes

#### Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

#### Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

#### Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22  
T: 582-7800  
E: news@arubatoday.com  
W: www.arubatoday.com  
f @arubatoday



facebook.com/arubatoday/



# NHL playoffs full of NYC teams: Rangers, Islanders, Devils

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**  
AP Hockey Writer

Keith Yandle walked into coffee shops when he played hockey in New York and would hear people talking about the next Rangers game against the Islanders or the New Jersey Devils.

"When you play those teams, even during the regular season, it adds a little bit more," Yandle said. "Those are fun rivalries."

Take those rivalries and add the prospect of elimination. The results could mean a spring sports scene in the Big Apple area that hasn't happened in almost three decades.

All three New York-area teams are in the NHL playoffs this year just the fourth time that has happened and the first since 2007. Add in the NBA's Knicks and Brooklyn Nets and it's the first time the city's five indoor major professional teams all qualified for the postseason since 1994, when the Rangers lifted the Stanley Cup.

The Devils and Rangers are facing off in the first round, their first playoff matchup since the 2012 Eastern Conference final.

"It's going to be a great



**New York Islanders goaltender Ilya Sorokin (30) celebrates with teammates after an NHL hockey game against the Montreal Canadiens on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, in Elmont, N.Y. The Islanders won 4-2.**

Associated Press

battle," Devils forward Erik Haula said. And given the teams' young talent and potential, it's easy to envision a championship parade coming to New York or North Jersey in the not-too-distant future.

"It's awesome for the sport," said Brian Boyle, who played for the Rangers and Devils before retiring and joining NHL Network. "The passion, that's what drives it. That's what makes sports great, and they have

that right there. And when they're all doing fairly well there's no doormats now it's exciting."

Much like Major League Baseball's Subway Series between the Yankees and Mets, the mix of contending hockey teams in New York makes for interesting tension in the stands and in local establishments showing the games on TV.

"You're cheering against your neighbors, your cousins, your family," said Is-

landers forward Kyle Palmieri, who also played for the Devils after growing up in New Jersey.

"Everyone kind of has their own alliances."

Because of that, visiting fans bleed into the crowd more easily than in other markets. But Zach Parise, now with the Islanders after captaining the Devils to the Cup Final in 2012, said it doesn't feel at all like a neutral-site game certainly not in the playoffs.

"Both fanbases are so into it that they drown out the other half really quick," Parise said.

Yandle, who broke the NHL's consecutive games played record last season before retiring to join TNT, pointed out the New York-area teams all making the playoffs is good for the sport's bottom line, too, from revenue to ratings.

You can, and it's over \$350 on the secondary market just to get into the place known as "The World's Most Famous Arena."

It may be a little cheaper at Prudential Center in Newark or sparkling new UBS Arena at Belmont Park on Long Island, which will host a postseason game for the first time in its second year of existence after the Islanders clinched their spot Wednesday night. They'll open against the Carolina Hurricanes. No matter where the games are, at least for the first round, the eyes of the hockey community will be drawn to New York or New Jersey just about every night. That's not something three-time Devils Stanley Cup-winning defenseman Ken Daneyko expected to experience again in his lifetime. □

## Fritz stuns champion Tsitsipas; 3rd-seeded Medvedev loses

**MONACO (AP)** — American Taylor Fritz upset two-time defending champion Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-2, 6-4 to reach the Monte Carlo Masters semifinals on Friday.

The second-seeded Tsitsipas was followed out of the tournament by third-seeded Daniil Medvedev, who lost 6-3, 6-4 to sixth-seeded Holger Rune of Denmark.

It means the top three seeds have now been knocked out of the clay-court tournament following 22-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic's exit in the third round on Thursday.

Tsitsipas was on a 12-match winning streak on the Cote d'Azur, where he claimed his two Masters 1,000 titles.

"I stuck to the strategy of

pulling the trigger and not letting him dictate with his forehand," the eighth-seeded Fritz said.

Tsitsipas broke back to 4-4 in the second set, but then

Fritz broke his serve easily for 5-4 and closed out the match with an ace for a love hold.

"I thought my level today was very high. I think I

played a very good match. Beating him here gives me a lot of confidence," said Fritz, who hit 17 winners. "It has given me the reassurance I need to know I can play well on clay."

Fritz has won five career titles, including two this year, but none on clay.

The 2022 Indian Wells champion next faces fifth-seeded Andrey Rublev, after the Russian beat German qualifier Jan-Lennard Struff 6-1, 7-6 (5).

Medvedev, who saved two match points when he beat Alexander Zverev on Thursday, was distracted by the crowd at the end of the first set and spoke to the umpire about it.

He broke back to 2-2 in the fourth game of the second set, but swiped his racket

on the ground in frustration after losing the match. Medvedev was looking to reach his sixth straight final this year, having won four titles in 2023.

"I have huge respect for everything he's done," Rune said.

"It was not easy to stop him but I'm happy I managed to do it."

Rune, who staged a comeback to beat Djokovic and win the Paris Masters last November, is aiming for his first title of the year.

The 19-year-old Dane next plays Italian Jannik Sinner, who is 21.

The seventh-seeded Sinner eased past No. 16 Lorenzo Musetti 6-2, 6-2 in an all-Italian quarterfinal to reach his third straight semifinal at Masters level this season. □



**Taylor Fritz, of the United States, reacts after scoring a point against Stefanos Tsitsipas, of Greece, during their Monte Carlo Tennis Masters quarterfinals match in Monaco, Friday, April 14, 2023.**

Associated Press



# MLB players find less time for small talk with pitch clock

By PAT GRAHAM

AP Sports Writer

**DENVER (AP)** — Home plate used to be a place where the sociable Brandon Crawford would touch base with catchers and umpires.

Just a casual conversation to catch up: How's the family? What's up? That sort of thing.

These days, the San Francisco Giants infielder keeps the chatter to a minimum. There's simply no spare time for small talk while on a pitch clock.

Because that 15 seconds between pitches 20 when someone's on base goes by fast at the plate. The penalty for idle chatter could be stiff a called strike on the hitter.

Social hour just has to wait. "You have to figure out a different time to get your conversations in, whether it's pregame or going to dinner or breakfast," Crawford said.

The pitch clock hasn't just made baseball quicker. It's quieter now, too. There's no real chance to talk shop on the bases with former teammates, good friends or umpires. Batters only get 30 seconds between at-bats to get set.

Dodgers manager Dave Roberts can't even imagine the strikes he might've had called on him if he was playing under these rules. He's well known for his affable personality and would always greet the home-plate umpire when he bat-



The pitch clock counts down as Pittsburgh Pirates' Carlos Santana (41) waits for a pitch from Houston Astros starting pitcher Jose Urquidy during the first inning of a baseball game in Pittsburgh, Wednesday, April 12, 2023.

Associated Press

ted, along with the catcher. He'd carry it right over to the bases, too, when he got aboard.

Roberts joked that he could strategize around his gift for gab maybe engage players he knows before they dig into the box.

"Try to get his attention and get that clock going," Roberts cracked.

The players, though, are starting to realize that silence is golden. This is no social call when they step up. They can't afford to fall behind 0-1 in the count.

Last week, Padres slugger Manny Machado became the first player ejected in an argument that followed a pitch clock violation, which

carries a penalty of an automatic strike for hitters and an automatic ball for pitchers. It wasn't for talking, but rather he thought he had called timeout as the pitch clock wound down to eight seconds the deadline for batters to be alert to the guy on the mound.

A cautionary tale, though, that every second matters. "It's all business," Giants outfielder Joc Pederson said. Rangers first baseman Nathaniel Lowe once received friendly advice from longtime umpire Joe West: Greet each ump by their first name and make a little small talk.

It's guidance Lowe took to heart. It's guidance that's

now hard to follow.

"It feels like I'm more worried about, 'Am I facing the pitcher with 14, 12 seconds? Should I have my foot on the gas?'" Lowe explained. "I think the pitch clock definitely takes away from the social aspect of it." Know this about Dominic Smith: He's not going to be as inviting at first base this season. The slick-fielding Washington Nationals player means no offense by the silent treatment, either. "I'm trying to just kick people's butt, I guess, so I don't talk as much as I used to," Smith said with a smile. "I don't mind not talking to guys over there. I like being in my own space, think-

ing about the game, trying to figure out ways to help us win." Dodgers pitcher Dustin May never quite understood being on speaking terms with the opposition during a game.

"Once I cross the lines, I didn't really talk to anybody" on the other team, May said.

Consider May a fan of the new rules. Batters can't step out as much to re-fasten their batting gloves over and over.

"We'd stand on the mound forever waiting on them," May said. "Now they're kind of forced to get in. They're on our pace now."

Rockies first baseman C.J. Cron prefers the quicker pace, too. He can afford to be a little more antisocial due to the time crunch.

"I'm not much of a converser over there," Cron said.

"Just say, 'What's up?' and then move on with my life." The lack of talk on the bases may actually fuel more rivalries or at least that's the thinking of Dodgers infielder Max Muncy.

"Because you're not having a chance to converse with people and you don't get to know people as much," Muncy said. "Maybe there's a chance of that?"

But it takes some getting used to. Crawford would greet the umpire behind the plate before the game and the catcher as he stepped into the box. It was almost part of his routine.

The times have changed. □

## Rory McIlroy to give up \$3 million by skipping Hilton Head

By The Associated Press

Rory McIlroy withdrawing from the RBC Heritage this week means he will forfeit \$3 million from his Player Impact Program bonus.

The PGA Tour confirmed Friday that McIlroy, who received \$9 million of his potential \$12 million bonus in January, will not be getting the balance.

The PIP, which began two years ago, rewards players based on various metrics of their popularity.

McIlroy finished second to Tiger Woods and stood to gain \$12 million 75% paid after the first week of the year, the remainder when they fulfilled obligations such as playing in all the designated events on the schedule.

Players were allowed to opt out of one.

McIlroy missed the Sentry Tournament of Champions at Kapalua. And then he withdrew from the RBC Heritage without giving a

reason after missing the cut in the Masters.

His manager, Sean Flaherty, said in a text message only that McIlroy did not make any comment regarding Hilton Head and that he would next play the Wells Fargo Championship at Quail Hollow next month. The PIP program is being cut in half to \$50 million next, and players will not be required to play designated tournaments in 2024 to receive the bonus. □



Rory McIlroy, of Northern Ireland, watches his tee shot on the fourth hole during the second round of the Masters golf tournament at Augusta National Golf Club on Friday, April 7, 2023, in Augusta, Ga.

Associated Press



# Weekly SPECIALS

<div><div>WAS \$18.28</div><div></div><div>Marucha/Top Blade</div></div>	<div><div>\$13.71</div><div>Per KG</div><div></div><div>Peppers Rainbow</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$29.71</div><div>\$3.71</div><div>Each</div><div></div><div>Angus New York Strip</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$2.22</div><div>\$24.57</div><div>Per KG</div><div></div><div>Lettuce Iceberg Wrapped</div></div>		
<div><div>WAS \$18.28</div><div>\$14.85</div><div>Per KG</div><div></div><div>Entrecoto</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$2.22</div><div>\$1.71</div><div>Each</div><div></div><div>Celery Sleeved</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$13.71</div><div>\$11.99</div><div>Each</div><div></div><div>Panamei Mahi Mahi Portions 16oz</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$2.45</div><div>\$2.17</div><div>Per Bag</div><div></div><div>Onions Yellow Medium 3lbs</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$2.45</div><div>\$1.88</div><div>100 GR</div><div></div><div>Hickory Smoked Turkey</div></div>	
<div><div>WAS \$2.30</div><div>\$1.42</div><div>Each</div><div></div><div>Spar Nr.1 Voorgekookte Rijst 1000 gr</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$2.13</div><div>\$1.71</div><div>Each</div><div></div><div>Landhof Halfvolle Melk 1L</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$3.25</div><div>\$2.59</div><div>Each</div><div></div><div>Gwoon Hagelslag Melk 400gr Pak</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$4.55</div><div>\$4.15</div><div>Each</div><div></div><div>Peak Olieballenmix Glutenvrij 300gr</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$2.85</div><div>\$2.51</div><div>Each</div><div></div><div>Sunny D Smooth 64oz</div></div>	
<div><div>WAS \$10.28</div><div>\$8.45</div><div>Each</div><div></div><div>Florida Natural OJ No Pulp 89oz</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$7.99</div><div>\$7.25</div><div>Each</div><div></div><div>EE Waffle Homestyle/Buttermilk 24ct</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$7.99</div><div>\$4.51</div><div>Each</div><div></div><div>Palmer Cocoa Butter Lotion 8.5oz</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$4.51</div><div>\$3.99</div><div>Each</div><div></div><div>Plenty Easy Pull Rol 1st</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$1.97</div><div>\$1.69</div><div>100 GR</div><div></div><div>Swiss Cheese</div></div>	<div><div>WAS \$2.11</div><div>\$1.82</div><div>100 GR</div><div></div><div>Oven Roasted White Turkey Breast</div></div>

DAIRY/FROZEN

HBC/GM

DELI/BAKERY

**SUPER**  
**Do it Center.**

VALID FROM  
**14 APRIL - 20 APRIL 2023**  
and while supplies last

SUPER Do it Center Aruba | Shaba 3, Noord Aruba | 5831111 | customerservice@doit.aw